



MR. ARCHIBALD N. FIELDS

An old time newspaper writer, who has contributed logically constructed articles to all the leading newspapers and magazines in the United States. At the present time Mr. Fields is an attaché of the State's Attorney's office and he commands the respect of Hon. Robert E. Crowe, State's Attorney of Cook County.

CONGRESSMAN BRITTEN, THE ILLINOIS LAWMAKER, HAS HAD IT RUBBED IN ON HIM

By A. N. Fields.
(Reprinted by request.)

I have observed from press dispatches that you are much disturbed over the alleged atrocities of the French Black Troops on the Rhine, and being so disturbed you contemplate a set of resolutions to present to the Congress of the United States, calling upon France to withdraw them from military occupation of the area herein designated. I also learn from the same source that Mrs. Britten has left this country for France for the purpose of using her influence with the French Government, that their removal may be speedily effected.

I must commend you and your estimable wife for your manifest interest in foreign affairs; but may I courteously inquire if you have been fully advised concerning existing conditions in your own country, and if you are not, may I not be permitted to call your attention to the recent expose of rapine, murder, peonage and slavery in the State of Georgia, the accuracy of which was verified and vouched for a very few days ago by the distinguished Governor of that State.

I take it, Congressman, that in your manifold duties you have not read in the public press that Negro citizens of your country have been, and are being burned at stake for the most trivial causes and their bones taken for souvenirs by the young men and women of your race.

It is not my hope to detract the whole of your attention from the evils

which are effecting the Germans on the Rhine, but merely to ask that you be just a bit generous with the suffering humanity in your own country.

I assume, Mr. Congressman, that you were born upon American soil and that you are acquainted with the history of this country, especially that portion of it having to do with our recent war, but for fear that your interest in Foreign affairs may have prevented you from properly acquainting yourself with the history of America, may I not, with becoming modesty, apprise you of the fact that over four hundred thousand of America's black soldiers braved the dangers of sea, pestilence, disease and war in their effort to make possible upon foreign shores the real spirit of American Democracy. Thousands of these brave heroes are sleeping in unmarked graves on the battlefields upon which they fought, while thousands of others returned to their homes afflicted with every disease known to the scourage of war. These black soldiers gave their all that the capitol at Washington, where you reign, might not become a German Territory.

I regard with admiration your interest in devastating Germany, and in the alleged conduct of the French Black Troops on the Rhine; I simply hope to interest you in some of the cruel and savage devastations in your own country, to the end that through your broad and magnanimous spirit, you may some day find time to address a memorial to the American people, showing your disapproval of the inhuman manner in which the black citizens of America are being treated by the white citizens of their own country.



HON. WILLIAM J. LYNCH

Member of the City Council from the Old Thirtieth Ward Who Stands Very High in the Estimation of All the Colored People in His Neck of the Woods. Alderman Lynch Wishes His Constituents and Friends the Compliments of the Holiday Season.

WITH THE CHRISTMAS PLANTS

Trees and Flowers Are Believed to Owe Peculiarities to Connection With Jesus.

THE legend of the Glastonbury Thorn is that after the death of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea came over to England. Shortly before Christmas, he rested on the summit of Weary-all hill, Glastonbury. There he thrust into the ground his staff, and on Christmas eve it was found to be covered with white blossoms. The bush is said to have continued blooming thus each Christmas eve until during the civil war, when it was cut down. Cuttings from the original thorn are said to bloom in this same wonderful way even yet.

The Sicilian children put pennyroyal in their coats on Christmas eve, believing that at the exact hour and minute when Jesus was born it will blossom.

There is a cherished legend in the East that the Rose of Jericho first blossomed at the birth of Jesus, closed at the crucifixion, and opened again at Easter, from which comes its name of Resurrection flower.

Many plants, trees and flowers are believed to owe their peculiarities to their connection with the birth or the childhood of Jesus. "The Star of Bethlehem" is so called because its white starlike flowers resemble the pictures of the Star of the East.

"Our Lady's Bedstraw" received its name because it was believed that the nanger in which the Babe lay was filled with this plant.

An old account tells the story in this manner: "The broom and the chick-peas began to rustle and crackle, and by this noise betrayed the fugitives. The flax bristled up. Happily for her, Mary was near a juniper; the hospitable tree opened its branches as arms and inclosed the Virgin and the Child within their folds, affording them a secure hiding place. Then the Virgin uttered a malediction against the brooms and the chick-peas, and ever since that day they have always rustled and crackled. But later the Virgin pardoned the flax its weakness and gave the juniper her blessing," which is said to account for the use of the juniper as Christmas decorations in some countries.

As paganism began to be supplanted by Christianity, many of the old customs were taken and handed down through the generations. In the Anglo-Saxon days of King Alfred the holiday season began December 16 and closed January 6. When Puritanism arose in England the fate of Christmas was threatened for a time, and even extended to this country, since the Puritans brought along with them to New England a feeling against the celebration of Christmas.

In 1643 the "Roundhead parliament" in England put a ban on the observance of Christmas. The court of Massachusetts in 1659 followed England's example and Christmas was put under a ban there. With the restoration of the English monarchy the celebration of Christmas was brought about, and Massachusetts again followed England's example and in 1681 the ban was lifted. From this time on Christmas has remained, and is now celebrated throughout the entire civilized world.

If you burn elder on Christmas eve, you will have revealed to you all the witches and sorcerers of the neighborhood.

If you steal anything at Christmas without being caught, you can steal safely for a year.

On Christmas eve thrash the garden with a flail, with only your shirt on, and the grass will grow well next year.

The wet strawbuds around the orchard trees on Christmas eve and it will make them fruitful.

On Christmas eve put a stone on every tree, and they will bear the more.

Beat the trees on Christmas night, and they will bear the more.

If after a Christmas dinner you shake out the tablecloth over the bare ground under the open sky, crumb-worm will grow on the spot.

If on Christmas day or eve, you hang a washcloth out on the hedge, and then groom the horses with it, they will grow fat.

As often as the cock crows on Christmas eve, the quarter of corn will be as dear.

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BELIEFS OF THE PEASANTS

Odd Christmas Superstitions Handed Down From Past Ages to the Ignorant Europeans.

THE peasantry of Europe have had certain Christmas superstitions handed down to them from past ages. Just how far these simple folk can be fooled is to be wondered.

If the light is let go out on Christmas morning, you will see spirits.

If you are born at sermon time Christmas eve, some one in the house will die within the year.

If you steal hay the night before Christmas, and give the cattle some, they will thrive and you will not be caught in any future thefts.

If you eat a raw egg, fasting on Christmas morn, you can carry heavy weights. It is unlucky to carry anything from the house on Christmas morning until something has been brought in.

It is unlucky to give a neighbor a live coal to kindle a fire with on Christmas morning.

If the fire burns brightly on Christmas morning, it betokens prosperity during the year; if it smolders, adversity.

If a dog howls the night before Christmas, it will go mad within the year.

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CHRISTMAS BAN IN 1643

Yuletide Observance Was Not Permitted by Edict of "Roundhead Parliament" in England.

IN THE northern part of Europe the ancient people kindled great fires to their gods, Odin and Thor, and sacrifices of men and cattle were made. The ancient Goths and Saxons termed this festival or feast "Yule," and we still use the word "Yuletide" in our day. Among the Teutons this holiday season was celebrated by decorating giant fir trees. The decorations consisted of lights, nuts, balls, golden apples and animals. These were to symbolize flashes of lightning, moon, stars and sun, while the animals represented sacrifices.

Christmas was not among the early festivals of the church. We find the first evidence of the feast from Egypt, according to the historians of the church, and December 25 was not the day on which it was universally celebrated. It was not until the Fourth or Fifth centuries that the celebration of the festival on this day spread to the East. The Nativity was celebrated December 25 at Rome before 354, and at Constantinople, not prior to 379.

As paganism began to be supplanted by Christianity, many of the old customs were taken and handed down through the generations. In the Anglo-Saxon days of King Alfred the holiday season began December 16 and closed January 6. When Puritanism arose in England the fate of Christmas was threatened for a time, and even extended to this country, since the Puritans brought along with them to New England a feeling against the celebration of Christmas.

In 1643 the "Roundhead parliament" in England put a ban on the observance of Christmas. The court of Massachusetts in 1659 followed England's example and Christmas was put under a ban there. With the restoration of the English monarchy the celebration of Christmas was brought about, and Massachusetts again followed England's example and in 1681 the ban was lifted. From this time on Christmas has remained, and is now celebrated throughout the entire civilized world.

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